



## Arizona State Parks Family Campout & Stewardship Program Nicole Armstrong-Best, Connections Program Manager

1300 W. Washington  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007  
(602) 542-7152

[narmstrong@azstateparks.gov](mailto:narmstrong@azstateparks.gov)

# Arizona Family Campout and Stewardship Program

2013-2014

Phoenix, Arizona

Federal Legislative District(s): 1,2,3 & 4

### PROGRAM FAST FACTS

**Congressional District(s): 1,2,3 & 4**  
**State Legislative District(s): 1,3,5,7,8,9,11**  
**Service Area by County/City: Pima, Pinal, Cochise, Santa Cruz, Yavapai, Yuma, Apache**  
**Project Federal Share: \$65,000**  
**Project Local Match: \$35,000**  
**Community Volunteers Recruited: 153**  
**Volunteer Hours Served: 1,591**  
**Value of Volunteer Hours: \$31,947**  
 \*2011 Independent Sector Rate for the Value of a Volunteer Hour in Arizona is \$20.08

### Community Need

The Arizona Park Service (ASP) has provided opportunities for groups and families to participate in environmental stewardship service projects, such as trail maintenance or river cleanups. However, ASP was not yet able to target family participation in a program that would increase their access to recreational activities as well as incorporate an environmental stewardship service project. The Family Campout and Environmental Stewardship Program is able to accomplish this by working to increase the whole family's knowledge regarding outdoor recreation, to support a positive first-hand experience in nature, to increase physical activity through recreation and service, and to build a stewardship ethic and promotes physical activity through volunteerism. In addition, the program targets the knowledge, skills and abilities of local community members who are 55 years of age or older to enrich the experiences of our campers. These exceptional people interpret the natural and cultural history of our parks, as well as providing information about outdoor survival skills, nutritional content of camping foods, Leave No Trace, and a host of other topics.

### National Priority Area and Program Performance Goals

**Focus Area: Environmental Stewardship**  
 - 400 multi-age family group participants will serve in an Environmental Stewardship service project.  
 - 200 participants will improve 10 miles of trails and/or waterways.  
 - 200 participants will remove invasive plant species from 5 acres of land.  
**Focus Area: Capacity Building**  
 - 50 encore volunteers will be recruited to work as volunteer presenters.

### National Priority Area and Program Performance Goals continued:

#### Focus Area: Healthy Futures

- 400 multi-age family participants will be exposed to nutritional information regarding healthy camping foods
- All 200 children who attend a campout will walk an average of 2 miles.

### Program Activities

Arizona State Parks' **Arizona Family Campout and Stewardship Program** is designed for families who have little or no experience camping. The program is intended to introduce families to the great experiences that can be shared with their family and inspire them to continue to explore the great outdoors and to care for their environment. The program runs from Saturday morning at 8am, through Sunday afternoon, 2pm. Activities are scheduled throughout both days and include a service project component on Sunday morning.

#### Activities include:

Hiking & Biking, Environmental Education, Map & Compass, Outdoor survival skills  
Camping, Healthy outdoor cooking, Leave No Trace

Members and volunteers support the families by leading activities, demonstrating healthy outdoor cooking and providing healthy meals, providing interpretation of the natural and cultural resources of the park, and supporting the environmental service project.

### Program Impact

#### In our Pilot Year

- We hosted 201 people, including 138 children at 9 campouts at 6 parks.
- We leveraged the support of 106 additional volunteers to help with the program. 77 of these were volunteers aged 55+
- We walked each child an average of 2.44 miles
- We held 9 service projects which improved 4.5 miles of trail and 12 acres of land.
- We provided nutritionally balanced meals.

#### In the First Quarter of Year 2 we have:

- Hosted 192 people, including 99 children at 7 campouts at 4 parks.
- We leveraged the support of 47 additional volunteers of which 32 were volunteers aged 55+.
- We walked each child an average of 3.5 miles
- We held 7 service projects which improved 4.5 miles of trail and 2 acres of land.
- We provided nutritionally balanced meals.

We currently have 13 additional campouts scheduled for Spring, 2014, at 9 parks throughout the State.



# Cont. Arizona Family Campout and Stewardship Program

## Mission

“Managing and conserving Arizona’s natural, cultural and recreational resources for the benefit of the people, both in our Parks and through our Partners.”

## Mission of the Program

We provide a structured outdoor camping program at various Arizona State Parks, where families engage with community members to experience and develop outdoor living skills, appreciate nature, and recreate through interpretation, safe and healthy practices, environmental stewardship, and engaging outdoor activities.

## Vision

“Arizona State Parks is indispensable to the economies, communities, and environments of Arizona.”

## History

Arizona State Parks (ASP) was established March 25, 1957. In the 57 years since, ASP has grown to include 30 parks which include a vast diversity of natural and cultural resources, in all areas of the State. The ASP Volunteer Program was established in 1983 and has grown to include nearly 1000 people donating an average of 200,000 hours per year. The ASP Volunteer Program incorporated the assistance of National Service volunteers in 2010 by hosting several NCCC teams. In 2012 ASP received State Commission funding to create the Arizona Family Campout and Stewardship Program. As a State agency, ASP has had funding challenges throughout its history, with the recent recession leading to a drastic reduction in both human and financial resources. The agency is able to continue to deliver a high level of service to the citizens of Arizona and visitors to our State due in large part to the continued support of volunteers.

## Partnerships

Lower Gear Backpacking Center  
Friends of Catalina State Park  
Friends of Lost Dutchman State Park  
Friends of Kartchner Caverns State Park  
Arizona State Parks Foundation  
Bass Pro Shops  
Summit Hut  
REI

## OTHER:

The following are comments that we have received from attendees to our campout programs.

**“My family had a wonderful time** at the Family Campout this weekend. The program had some very engaging activities and the volunteers were excellent. The mountain biking course with Louie and Randy was superlative. We liked it so much that we would very much like to attend the Family Campout at Lost Dutchman SP to reinforce the concept of environmental stewardship with the children and give them another very healthy weekend in the great outdoors.” —Parent, Sept. 22, 2013, *attended Dead Horse Ranch event*

**“What an incredible program!** As a single mother of three this provided me and my boys a camping experience that was safe, educational, and fun. Thanks to the AZ State Parks staff, volunteers, Lower Gear, and anyone else that contributed!” —Parent, Oct. 6, *attended Kartchner Caverns event*

**You hit a homerun with my family.** My boys are still talking about the mountain biking and archery. We enjoyed our time at camp and the boys even had fun "working" on the service project. —Parent, Nov. 4, 2013, *attended Dead Horse Ranch event*

